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TERRA-COTTA FIGURINES FROM CORINTH

DURING the excavations at Corinth in the spring of 1896 by the American School a considerable quantity of terra-cotta figurines was brought to light, notably in the theatre, and while the collection casually made in running trial trenches cannot be compared with the great yields of recent times at Athens, Olympia, Cyprus, Dodona, Delos, Corcyra, Tegea, Ptoön, to say nothing of the yield of graves in numerous other places, it still deserves to be inventoried. Most of the figurines are in a fragmentary condition, and hardly any of them can claim attention on the score of beauty. But, though humble representatives of a humble sphere of art, they are historically interesting, and it is not wholly unreasonable to claim for them a greater interest than that which usually attaches to such objects, on the score that they came from Corinth, a place of such renown that all which serves to throw light upon its art and its history has a value for that reason alone. While it will not be necessary, then, to enter upon any general discussion of the whole matter of technique in terra-cottas, the main points of interest can be given that are connected with the pieces discovered by us.

I. VERY ARCHAIC FIGURES

Figure 1. — Horse and Rider. Horse, 0.07 m. from nose to roots of tail. Rider, 0.035 m. high. There are forty-four other examples of about the same dimensions. Nearly all are of yellowish color without a trace of paint. But as one or two show traces of bright vermillion, and others of a pipe-clay

coating, it is likely that most of them were once painted red over a thin slip, and that both paint and slip have now disappeared. In several the clay, both outside and inside, is red, a variation probably due to a difference in the firing. Owing to the small dimensions, the figures of both horse and man are solid. One horse has a different shape from the others, the body being remarkably short, allowing just room enough for the rider to sit. The riders are very rude, the face having but a single feature, the nose, which is made by pinching out a little of the clay. Above this a band of clay laid around the head makes a sort of turban. They have four little projections, each being a mere pinch of clay, serving as arms and legs, the arms being attached to the long neck, and the legs to the body of the horse. These are somewhat easily detached from the horse, and in that case one of them might readily be taken for a rudimentary quadruped. I had begun to classify a number of them as primitive idols, when it suddenly dawned upon me that they were dismounted cavalry. Twenty-five cases seem certain; several others are dubious. One shows a rudimentary helmet. One hundred and seven fragments of animals remain, some of which may be horses, but in no case showing the trace of the attached rider.

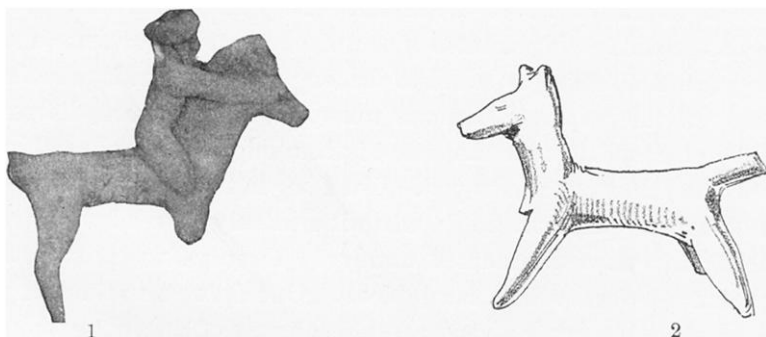
The provenience of all these equestrian figures was the Theatre (with one exception, which came from Trench VIII).¹ Perhaps we may attach some significance to this fact. Such figures, if not found in graves, generally point to the neighborhood of some temple, where they were *anathemata*, as in the great finds at Tegea (*Ath. Mitth.* IV, p. 168) and Coreyra (*B.C.H.* XV, pp. 1 ff.), or to the neighborhood of a terra-cotta factory, as at Tarsus (*Gaz. des Beaux Arts*, November, 1876). In the present case it would be easy, were it not for considerations which will come up later, to explain the mass of these figures as coming from the temple of Athena Chalinitis, mentioned by Pausanias as *πρὸς τῇ θεάτρῳ*. Although this epithet was applied to Athena at Corinth, with

¹ See this *Journal*, Vol. I, 1897, Plates XIV, XVIII.

especial reference to her bridling Pegasus for Bellerophon, it is, not unlikely that it was first applied to her in a more general way, as the tamer of horses. Thus we might explain the presence in her temple of many an *anathema* of a horse and rider, with no hint of Pegasus about it.¹

Of the other animals, which are certainly not horses, a few may be mentioned in passing.

Figure 2. — From nose to roots of tail, 0.055 m. Perhaps a dog or a donkey. That there are fragments of dogs included in the lot seems almost certain from the rather fine hind part



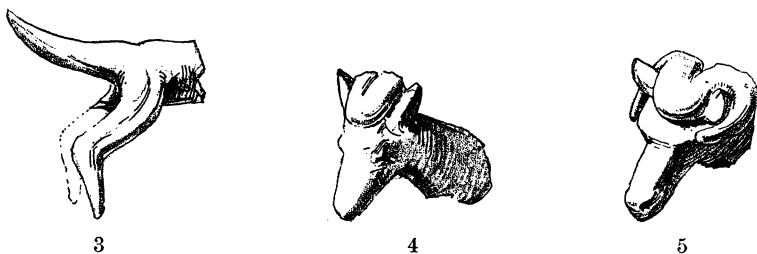
of one animal, especially the right hind leg (Fig. 3), showing much better anatomy than the hind legs of Fig. 1.

Figures 4, 5, 6, 7. — Height, 0.03 m. These appear to be heads of cows, although this can hardly be considered as certain. The strange piece wound about the horns may be some of the ornamental equipment for sacrifice, and so we have another indication that these figures came from an adjacent temple. Fig. 4, which was probably arrayed like the rest, has only ears. In Fig. 5 horns seem pretty clearly indicated.

¹ A horse and rider exactly like ours is given in the *Arch. Anzeiger*, 1889, p. 156 (in Dresden). Far more developed, though still very archaic, are horse and rider from Boeotia in *B.C.H.* 1890, pl. xiii; or in Heuzey, *Les Figurines Antiques de Terre Cuite du Musée du Louvre*, pl. 10, 3. A parallel to the human part of the combination is seen in several figures published by di Cesnola, *Cypriote Antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of New York*, vol. II, pl. vii, and to the whole combination *ibid.* pl. lxix, 638 and 641.

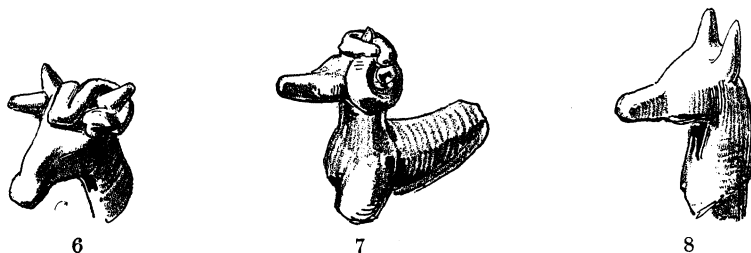
Fig. 6 seems to have both ears and horns, while in Fig. 7 the case is extremely doubtful.

Figure 8. — Height, 0.04 m. This might be the head of a dog (like Fig. 2) of the greyhound type, but it looks more



FIGURES 3-5. — ARCHAIC TERRA-COTTAS.

like a fox or some other wild animal. There are in our collection twenty-seven animals, of which the greater part are probably dogs. Besides a residuum of doubtful animals, we have a good number of birds, of which thirty-eight may be classified as doves (Fig. 9; length, 0.06 m.), although there



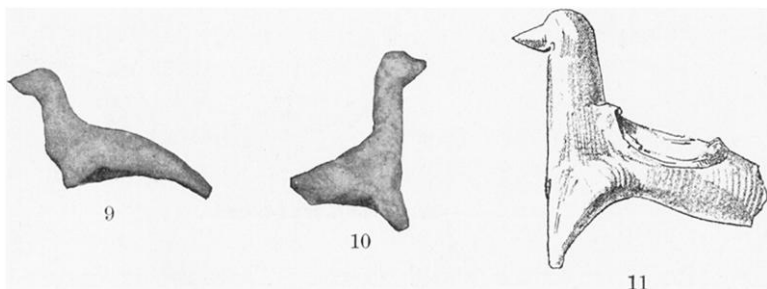
FIGURES 6-8. — ARCHAIC TERRA-COTTAS.

are others, resembling somewhat this one, which by the roundness of their body seem to be seals.

Figure 10, with long neck (height, 0.05 m.), can hardly be meant for a dove. It is more probably some aquatic bird. In Trench XVI was found a similar long-necked bronze bird on a round vase, like many figures from the Athenian Acropolis.

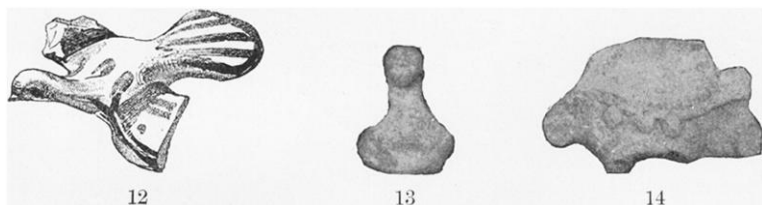
Figure 11. — Height, 0.047 m. Same as Fig. 10, except that it has marks of something formerly resting on its back ; not a rider, unless one seated sidewise.

Figure 12 is one of three doves in the act of flying. This one, 0.05 m. long, has red stripes on tail and wings, and three little red spots on the back, laid on a gray clay.



FIGURES 9-11. — ARCHAIC TERRA-COTTAS.

Figure 13. — Height, 0.03 m. Here is represented a human figure, either with folded arms or, more probably, holding something, perhaps a loaf of bread, against his chest. The body is flat, and the head more formless, if possible, than that

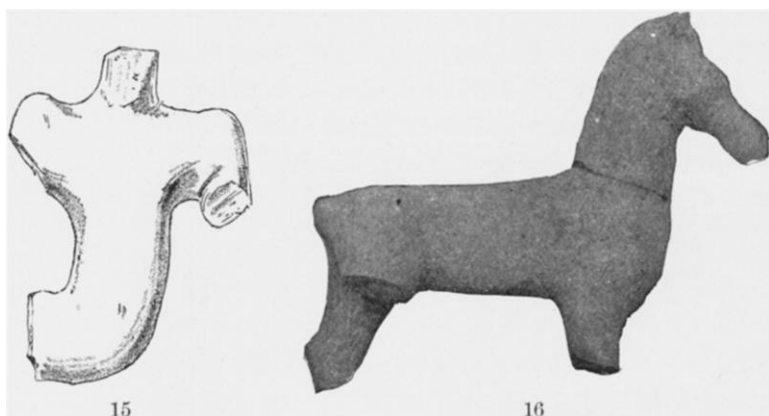


FIGURES 12-14. — ARCHAIC TERRA-COTTAS.

of the riders already mentioned. It resembles them in having the turban, but its face is like the beak of a bird.

Figure 14. — Height, 0.035 m. This is a flat breast, bearing a necklace or breast band fastened at the left shoulder by a great brooch. One at the right shoulder has doubtless been broken off. A similar breast was also found with one pendant on the necklace instead of three. The resemblance is close to

the figurine from Cyrene in Heuzey, *op. cit.* pl. 40, 1, and a Tanagra figurine, pl. 17, 4. This type is that of a very primitive idol, and the object itself is doubtless very old, although it was found in Trench I, where very little else of an archaic character was discovered.



FIGURES 15 AND 16. — TERRA-COTTA FIGURINES.

Figure 15. — Height, 0.065 m. The upper part of a human being joined to the lower part of some marine animal; perhaps a representation of some Corinthian sea divinity, as Melicertes.

II. LATER FIGURES

The objects hitherto mentioned are all distinctly archaic. In marked contrast are the following :

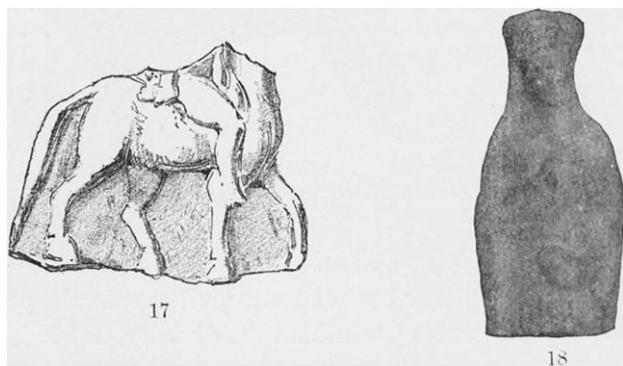
Figure 16. — Length from nose to roots of tail, 0.11 m. There can be no doubt that this figure is that of a horse; the rendering of it indeed is not without spirit. This was found in Trench XV at a depth of about five metres.

Figure 17. — Height, 0.045 m. Length, 0.06 m. Horse and rider in relief. The three examples of this kind are from the theatre, and they are so nearly alike, that they may be said to be from the same mould. Like the five following numbers they were made by pressing the clay into a shallow mould with the

fingers. The back is rough, as the pressure of the fingers left it, like most of the figurines from Corcyra (*B.C.H.* XV, 1891, pp. 12 ff.). These horses and riders are a great advance on those mentioned under Fig. 1, but they are still, like the preceding number, sufficiently archaic to derive their chief interest from this fact.

We now come to the chief objects of our inventory, a series of female figures in hieratic attitudes, standing, sitting, and reclining. These were all found in the theatre.

Figure 18. — Standing figure; height, 0.08 m. There are parts of sixty-eight other figures not all cast in the same mould,



FIGURES 17 AND 18. — LATER TERRA-COTTAS.

but at all events nearly identical. Sixteen have their heads preserved. The total height of these figures when intact must have been 0.11 or 0.12 m., but some are smaller. One, very well preserved except for the head, is considerably larger, about 0.14 m. high. The figures are fully draped with the *diploidion*, and standing very stiffly with the feet close together, just protruding from under the bottom of the chiton on a quadrangular base. The head carries the *polos* with a veil falling down at the back and sides. The right hand holding a bird, doubtless a dove, is brought up nearly to the level of the breast, and the left holding a round object, doubtless an apple, is brought also to the front, but a little lower down. Any one of the three

attributes, *polos* (Paus. II, 10, 5), dove, or apple, would be enough to indicate, especially at Corinth, that the person represented was Aphrodite; and a combination of all three makes the identification certain. Since, then, the same identification would follow probably for the seated and the reclining types, we have Aphrodite brooding over our theatre more heavily than over Euripides's literary and family life. Gratifying as it was to find so many riding figures as a token of the proximity of the temple of Athena Chalinitis, it is perplexing to find these figures of Aphrodite in such profusion in the same place, where no temple of Aphrodite is mentioned. Pausanias mentions only one temple of Aphrodite at Corinth, on the Acro-Corinthus, in which was an armed statue of Aphrodite (*ὀπλισμένη*, Paus. II, 4, 7). It is possible that these objects came from a temple of Aphrodite that was destroyed and not rebuilt at the refounding of the city, and so was unknown to Pausanias. It seems hardly probable that an armed Aphrodite was the type of goddess that held such noted sway in pleasure-loving Corinth. As the *cōroplastēs* was generally inspired by some great and noted work of art, it may be suspected that there were in Corinth noted cultus statues of Aphrodite standing and sitting, if not reclining.

But before passing to the two latter types, it is interesting to notice parallels to our standing type. The figure given in Heuzey, *op. cit.* pl. 18, 2, is not a parallel: it is identical. It was said to have been bought at Corinth, and for once we may now take the word of a dealer in antiquities. We have found the heap from which that waif found its way to the Louvre. The date assigned by Heuzey, the beginning of the fifth century B.C., accords well with the total impression of the mass. Parallel cases would be Heuzey, *op. cit.* pl. 12, 5, in which the apple is lacking and the dove shifted to the left hand; the Aphrodite of Lyons (Collignon, *Histoire de la Sculpture Grecque*, p. 190, fig. 90), which has the dove in the right hand as ours has, but nothing in the left. Cf. also *B.C.H.* XV, pp. 32, 36, and pl. 1, where each example repre-

sents a large class. No. 33, p. 46 *ibid.* was, before the attributes were broken away, an exact parallel, and it is interesting to find this coincidence of form in Corinth and Coreyra.

It is not now necessary to trace this figure from the Babylonian Astarte, although the line of descent is clear, and may be seen in the successive plates of a work like that of Heuzey, *op. cit.* Greek art at the beginning of the fifth century had so emancipated itself from oriental shackles that even a *coroplastes* had raised both hands from the side where they droop in the older examples, and given each of them a function. Heuzey,



FIGURES 19 AND 20. — LATER TERRA-COTTAS.

op. cit. pl. 18 *bis*, 1, is a replica of our figure, but, by substituting bow and stag, the *coroplastes* has made it into an Artemis as in so many of the Coreyrean figurines (*B.C.H.* XV).

Figures 19 and 20. — Seated type. Height, 0.09 m. and 0.055 m. This includes, in all, thirteen examples. The right hand is always at the breast with a dove; the left is down on the lap. The head-dress is, as in the standing type, the *polos*. In some cases, where only the upper part of the body is preserved, it might be difficult to tell whether the figure is seated or not, were it not for the two knobs protruding from behind the shoulders and representing the back of the chair. This type is paralleled by several figures of Heuzey, *op. cit.* pl. 11 and 12.

Figure 21.—Reclining type, size 0.05 × 0.05 m. This class is represented by twenty-one examples. The *polos* is not so high in this figure as in the cases just mentioned, but if Fig. 22, as would seem probable from the right side protruding so far, belonged to the same type, the high *polos* was not lacking here also. This latter example, 0.04 m. high, has blue and red paint on the *polos* as well as a blue garment. One example is larger and has a higher couch. That the reclining figure is, in every case but one, a female seems pretty certain. That it is also Aphrodite and derived from the Babylonian Astarte there can be likewise little doubt.¹ Parallel examples appear in Heuzey, *op. cit.* pl. 3.

One feature applies to all these three classes of figures. They were once richly painted. In their present condition few show it: since when they are rubbed, except in the case of those that were badly worn at the time of discovery, along with the accretion of earth, various colors also are lost in the process of rubbing, and thus the only way of keeping the proof of color is in most cases to let it stay under the accretion.

We know enough to declare that these little *anathemata* once made a brilliant showing as they stood in rows in the temple of the luxurious goddess. As to details, the *polos* and flesh parts are most commonly seen to be red, which is also the favorite color for the garments. In one case, where no color appears elsewhere, because it is scoured off, two little vermilion shoes stick out from under the dress. Another shows a red band running across the breast and descending on each side of the chiton. It is difficult to define the use of blue with any certainty, but it is certainly present in spots, and probably made borders for red garments. In many cases it is difficult to say where the chiton begins. We find the breast bare, and a little lower down sure traces of drapery, but owing often to

¹ Cf. Heuzey, *Cat. des Fig. Art. du Louvre*, text, p. 45. Cf. Hdt. I, 181, 182. Kekulé, *Antike Terrakotten*, II (Sicilien), p. 13, fig. 19, with remarks *à propos* of a figurine from Selinus: "In mehreren Exemplaren vorhanden, Typus einer liegenden Figur welche fast ueberall mit allerlei Veränderungen vorkommt."

wearing away of the surface the line of transition is obliterated.

After the classification of all the fragments into the three classes, there remain thirty-two heads, of which it is impossible to predicate whether they belong to the standing, the sitting, or the reclining type.

There is nothing surprising in the preponderance of female forms in figurines, wherever found. Art in ancient Greece, as well as in the Middle Ages, was powerfully attracted by "das ewig Weibliche."¹

Figure 23. — Height, 0.04 m. This head of very red clay seems very long, owing to the coiffure. The part covered by the hair is half as high as the length of the face. The type of



FIGURES 21-23. — LATER TERRA-COTTAS.

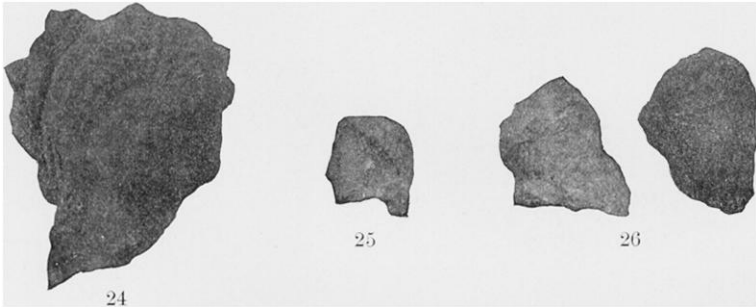
face is uncertain. It is so different from a head of about the same size and same colored clay from Trench VII, of the regular Aphrodite type of Alexandrian or Graeco-Roman times (Fig. 23 *a*; height, 0.035 m.), that it must probably represent some mortal woman, perhaps of Roman times.

Figure 24. — Height from chin to top, 0.05 m. Dark red clay. This head has nothing particularly worthy of attention except in the way of contrast to the others. It has a most elaborate coiffure, four braids, each one larger than the one below it, encircling the forehead, with a transverse double band like a braid running up through them from the middle of the forehead, and two long braids running down each side. At the back of the head is a circlet of two thick cylindrical bands,

¹ See Pottier, *Statuettes de Terre cuite dans l'Antiquité*, pp. 38, 39.

perhaps withes, intertwined. There are also large earrings. The head is from Trench IX, where most of the other objects found were of Roman times, and this may also belong to the same period, although the face, in spite of its overloading with ornament, has considerable dignity, which reminds one of Hellenic work. The coiffure resembles somewhat that of the Hera in *La Nécropole de Myrina*, vol. II, pl. 28.

Figure 25. — Height, 0.04 m. This head of black clay bears a helmet, and on the strength of this I at first classified it as a man's head, but in view of the softness of the cheeks and chin, it must be put down as a female. The features are so muti-



FIGURES 24-26. — LATER TERRA-COTTAS.

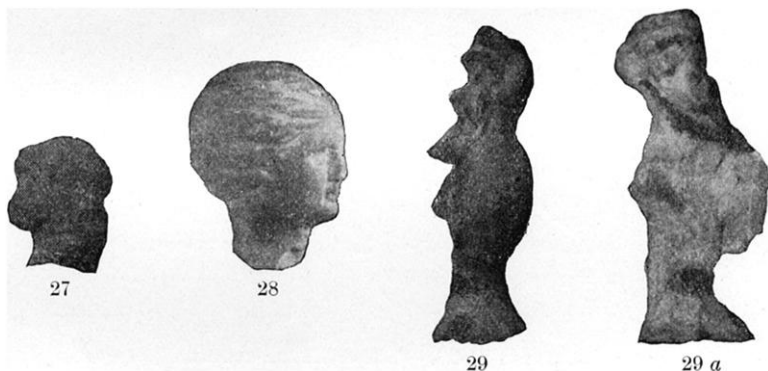
lated as to make accurate judgment difficult; but from the softness already spoken of, it can hardly be considered an Athena, an identification to which a helmet would naturally point. It is of course possible that a Corinthian *coroplastes* might give such softness to Athena, who comes to such honor on the coins of Corinth, but when we contrast it with Fig. 33, which represents Athena, we are half inclined to remember the Aphrodite *ὠπλισμένη*, already referred to, as explaining this type.

A considerable number of male figures and heads was also found.

Figure 26. — Height, 0.04 m. This head of dull red clay, with a beard shaped like a spade, and a diadem on the hair, seems to represent Zeus. The work is more sketchy than the

other male heads, the beard being produced by a series of perpendicular scratches irregularly interrupted.

Figure 27. — Height, 0.035 m. Black clay. A very fine head, reminding one of the heads of Asclepios or of Homer. It has a thick band encircling the head just above the forehead, the part in front being now broken off. A curious feature is the object, like a folded piece of cloth, falling down over the right ear. The other side probably had a similar flap, now lost. The lower end of the preserved flap curls up in such a way that the first view from the front makes one think of Zeus



FIGURES 27-29 *a*. — LATER TERRA-COTTAS.

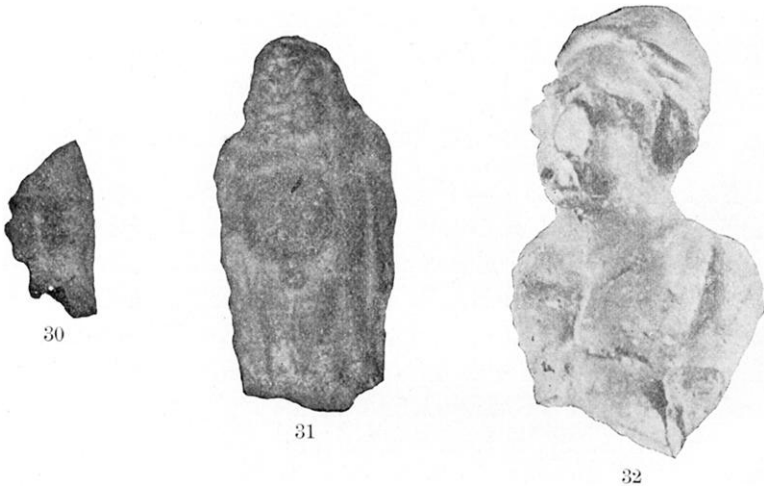
Ammon with horns. It is the most kingly head of all that we found, and would do ample honor to Dionysus or Zeus.

Figure 28. — Height, 0.025 m. A small and delicate head, with fine features. The hair is plaited over the forehead, and above that is a garland. The head so surpasses the others in delicacy that one might be tempted to take it for a woman, but the coiffure is against that. The paint is quite well preserved, on the hair a chocolate color, and on the face yellow ochre.

Figure 29 and 29 *a*. — Height, 0.07 m. Red clay. A heavily bearded warrior bearing a shield on his left arm. The only feature of the face which he possesses is an enormous nose, although there are something like hollows where the eyes

should be. I should hesitate to call this a caricature. It is probably very archaic, and, though larger, represents the same rude essays at the human form as the rudimentary riders spoken of at the beginning. Much more elaborate, but similar in its general comical effect, is a head from Cyprus figured by Heuzey, *op. cit.* pl. 10, 4. Less elaborate is Cesnola, *op. cit.* pl. ix, fig. 68.

Figure 30. — Height, 0.045 m. Insignificant head with a conical cap, which reminds one of a similar cap on the Payne-



FIGURES 30-32. — LATER TERRA-COTTAS.

Knight bronze, *Jahrbuch des Instituts*, 1887, p. 13; cf. also pl. i. If one were searching for divinities in every case, one might compare this head with the Hermes Criophorus from Thespieae; Collignon, *Manual of Greek Archaeology* (Eng. Trans.), p. 247, fig. 76.

Figure 31. — Height, 0.09 m. Dull red clay. A satyr-like figure with leering goggle-eyed face, swollen belly, and large male organ indecently exposed. From the fact that this was found in the theatre, it may not unreasonably be supposed to represent a comic actor, like the figures given in *Nécropole de Myrina*, pl. 45.

Figure 32. — Height, 0.07 m. Chocolate colored clay. With this in Trench VII were found at the mouth of a perpendicular shaft, 3.5 m. below the surface of the soil, two other pieces of figurines of the same colored clay, one containing two slender legs on a round basis, and another the middle part of an ithyphallic figure. The first fragment may be a part of our figure, but the second cannot be, because its proportions are too large. We have here one of those grotesque figurines so common in Tanagra and elsewhere.¹ A flute-player with the stub end of a flute sticking in his mouth is blowing with distended cheeks, as if, like Marsyas, his skin depended on his powers of blowing. His conical cap contributes to the comic effect.

III. FIGURINE OF THE BEST PERIOD

Figures 33 and 33 a. — Height, 0.10 m. Brown clay. Found in Trench VIII, 4 m. below the surface. It is a pleasure to close this inventory with a piece of real merit. The warrior goddess, Athena, here stands before us in a form worthy of her reputation. She has a helmet with a visor resting upon what is probably meant for a thick band of hair, although it looks suspiciously like a cloth pad, and with a high point broken off just where it begins to curve forward. At the back of the head, joined on as a separate piece, is the lower end of the crest which once doubtless ran up over the point just mentioned, and, projecting forward, made the usual high-crested Attic helmet. The head seems to find its exact counterpart in the much smaller one from the temple of Athena Craneaia near Elateia (*B.C.H.* XI, pl. v, 8).

Our figure has an abnormally long neck. The right arm, now broken off, was raised, as is seen from the break, as well as from the greater height of the right shoulder in the front view. This arm probably held a spear. The attitude, however, is not one of attack but of calm self-control befitting the

¹ Collignon, *Manual of Greek Archaeology*, p. 259, fig. 82. Pottier, *op. cit.* p. 225; *Arch. Zeit.* 1863, Taf. 173; Baumeister, *Denkmäler*, p. 2112, fig. 2364.

Aeschylean sentiment, "All that the gods work is effortless and calm." Such may well have been the attitude of the great Athena Promachus at Athens. The face is crumbling somewhat, but enough of the features remain to warrant the belief that the maker of the statuette stood under the influence of the great masters, the contemporaries of Phidias. Unlike the figures of Aphrodite so abundantly represented in various



FIGURES 33 AND 33 *a*. — TERRA-COTTA OF THE BEST PERIOD.

types, this figurine was not cast in a mould which was to produce dozens of similar figures, but was in itself a work of art on which some skilful hand did its best work. It is contrasted with them as the figure in *B.C.H.* XV, pl. viii, 1¹ is contrasted with the bulk of the Coreyra figurines. Like the comical figure last described it is hollow, and shows a big aperture at the back, for the firing. Traces of paint appear all over the hel-

¹ See the remarks of Lechat, *ibid.* pp. 84-86.

met and dress, which is a chiton with *diplois*. How the blue and red were distributed it is difficult to tell. Red seems to fill the depressions which encircle the helmet, while blue covers the ridges. All that is certain is that the beauty of this dignified figure must have been much enhanced by its parure when it was fresh.

RUFUS B. RICHARDSON.